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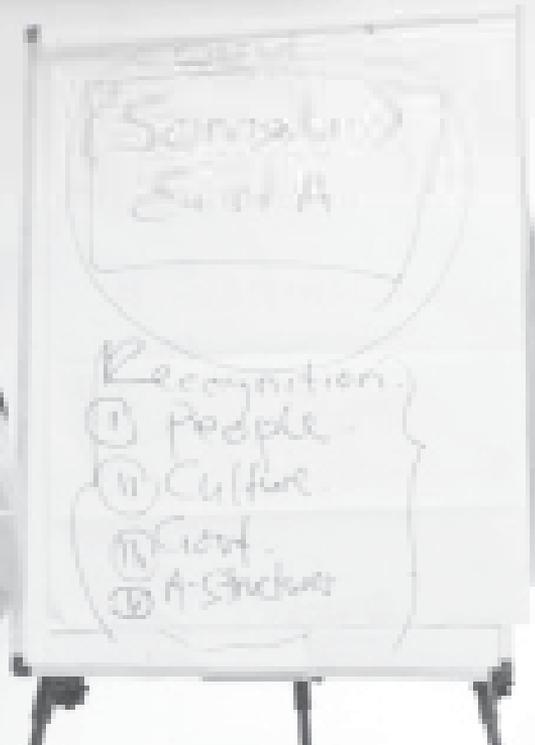
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Foreword

The International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) is a research and training institution focusing on capacity building at the strategic, operational and tactical levels within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). It has developed into a regional center of excellence for the African Standby Force (ASF) in Eastern Africa. The Centre addresses the complexities of contemporary UN/AU integrated Peace Support Operations (PSOs) by exposing actors to the multi-dimensional nature of these operations. The research that informs this Issue Brief covers a broad spectrum of issues ranging from conflict prevention and management to post-conflict reconstruction. The Centre has made considerable contribution in training and research on peace support issues in Somalia through design of the training curriculum, field research and publication of Occasional Papers and Issue Briefs. The Occasional papers are produced annually and the Issue Briefs, quarterly. The issue briefs are an important contribution to the vision and mission of IPSTC.

The third quarter issue brief (No. 6 of 2013), contains two articles on peace and security in Somalia, i.e. *Environmental Insecurity in Eastern Africa: The Case of Somalia and The Impact of Armed Conflict on Women in Somalia*. The Issue Briefs provide insights into pertinent peace and security issues in Somalia that are useful to policy makers and aim to contribute to the security debate and praxis in Somalia. The articles in the Issue Brief are also expected to inform the design of training modules at the IPSTC.

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Brig. Robert Kabage
Director, IPSTC

Acronyms

| | |
|---------------|--|
| ADO | Agricultural Development Organization |
| AMISOM | African Union Mission in Somalia |
| AU | African Union |
| COGWO | Coalition of Grassroots Women's Organizations |
| CRD | Centre for Research and Dialogue |
| COVS | Committee of the Organizations of Voluntary Services |
| EAI | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| EU | European Union |
| FEWS | Famine Early Warning Systems |
| FGM | Female Genital Mutilation |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| FSAU | Food Security Analysis Unit |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GNI | Gross National Income |
| IDPS | Internally Displaced Persons |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development |
| IOTC | Indian Ocean Tuna Commission |
| MEA | Multilateral Environmental Agreements |
| MPA | Marine Protected Areas |
| NEAP | National Environment Strategy and Action Plan |
| NBSAP | National Bio-diversity Strategy and Action Plan |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| NERAD | National Environmental Research and Disaster Preparedness Authority |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PHRN | Peace and Human Rights Network |
| PPP | Private-Public Partnerships |
| PSC | Peace and Security Council |
| PSOs | Peace Support Operations |
| RDP | Recovery and Development Programme |
| SDGEA | Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa |
| SGBV | Sexual and Gender Based violence |
| SSDF | Somali Salvation Democratic Front |
| SNM | Somali National Movement |
| SWALIM | Somalia Water and Land Information Management Unit |
| SSWC | Save Somali Women and Children |
| SWDO | Somali Women's Democratic Organization |
| SWODA | Somali Women Development Association |
| TFG | Transitional Federal Government |
| TNG | Transitional National Government |
| UNCLOS | United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCSW | United Nations Commission on the Status of Women |
| UNFCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |

USC United Somali Congress
USSR United Soviet Socialist Republics
WAWA We Are Women Activists

Introduction to the Issue Briefs

The two papers presented in this third quarter Issue briefs examine diverse issues of peace and security in Somalia. The first topic briefly examines the contribution of environmental insecurity in the current conflict situation in Somalia while the second topic addresses the impact of armed conflict on women in Somalia.

The first paper, *Environmental Insecurity in Eastern Africa: The Case of Somalia*, argues that a more threatening challenge in managing environmental security lies beyond the visible open crisis of governance in Somalia. It identifies the need for conducting Peace Support Operations training in order to address the vital issue of environmental security. It further argues that supporting environmental security management is an effective conflict prevention measure which addresses some of the root causes of conflict.

The second paper, *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Women in Somalia*, assesses the impact that protracted armed conflict in Somalia has had on women. The more than two decades of conflict in Somalia has impacted the lives of Somalia women in various ways: they suffered a great deal from violence; food insecurity; and other threats that rendered them vulnerable to political and economic insecurity. Despite these problems, Somali women have risen up and played important roles as peacemakers and economic strongholds in their communities. It argues that the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the United Nations Mission (UNSOM) and agencies active in Somalia should take seriously the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women so as to ensure women issues are put into consideration and addressed from the onset of conflict.

Environmental Insecurity in Eastern Africa: The Case of Somalia

Joseph Kioi Mbugua

1. Introduction

This paper provides an overview of the contribution of environmental insecurity in the current conflict situation in Somalia and proposes how an effective environmental security strategy can be designed for the country. It is organized into four sections namely; introduction, key environmental security challenges, managing environmental security, conclusion and recommendations.

Environmental change has come to be considered as a security issue since more countries continue to experience internal conflict partly due to a number of climate related factors. In addition to the protracted political instability in Somalia, this is an underlying factor that will continue to plague Somalia even after a political solution to the current conflict is found. Natural and human activities continue to contribute to food insecurity, water scarcity, diseases, deforestation, drought and famine.

Somalia comprises the areas known as South Central Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland. It has the longest coastline in Africa (3,025 Km) and an estimated population of 8.9 million people, comprising 6 major clans and other smaller groups.¹ The country is hot, arid and semi-arid with a rainfall of 50-150 mm along the coast and up to 500 mm in the northern highlands. Droughts occur for 2-3 years and are often followed by floods. The topography comprises plateaus and coastal plains with some highlands in the north, and forests and

1 K.D. Vadyanathan, 'Population Statistics of Somalia', UNDP Somalia, 1997, p. 13.

woodlands dominated by acacia cover about 23% of the country. There are two permanent rivers, Jubba and Shabelle, originating from the Ethiopian Highlands. Agricultural activities mostly take place along the river banks.² Minimal irrigation takes place compared to the existing potential. Erratic rain-fed farming of millet and sorghum is practiced in some areas. About 14% of the population is engaged in crop farming. Livestock keeping is the main activity for over 50% of the population and contributes about 40% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Somalia has five main ecosystems; coastal aquatic (11%); desert and semi-desert (38%); grass and shrub (36%); interrupted woods (14%); and crop and Settlement (1%). The three main productive sectors are livestock, charcoal and crops. Due to the rampant insecurity in Somalia, conservation issues are not a priority for governments, community or the private sector.

This study has established that environmental degradation is one of the major causes of conflict in Somalia. Control of resources such as land, water and pasture is behind the struggle by regional governments to maintain their territories. The federal government, on the other hand, wants to exert authority over these territories so that it can control and manage the resources. Proper management of the environment, therefore, is a pre-requisite for long term peace and security in the country.

To preserve security in Somalia requires taking into consideration the entire human-ecological interface. Understanding the role of environmental security in the overall recovery, reconstruction, economic planning and development in Somalia is critical for peace and security in the country. The national security policy and strategy for Somalia must put in place measures for addressing environmental security since it forms one of the most important pillars of durable peace and security in the country.

2 International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), *Country Environmental Profile for Somalia*, Nairobi: The European Commission Somalia Office, p. 7.

1.1 Focus and Scope

This paper assesses the impact of environmental degradation on peace and security in Somalia. It also examines mitigation and prevention strategies for environmental stresses including threats to natural resources and environmental risks that directly contribute to political and economic instability in Somalia.

1.2 Research Objectives

- To assess the contribution of environmental degradation in the current conflict in Somalia;
- To assess the capacity of the governments of Somalia, Somaliland and other regions to mitigate the impact of environmental insecurity;
- To assess the role of civil society, private sector and international organizations in environmental security management; and
- To identify the challenges and opportunities for effective environmental security management and their implications for Peace Support Operations (PSOs) in Somalia.

1.3 Statement and Significance of the Problem

There has been heightened global concern on climate change which has already had disastrous effects on resources in Africa. In 2004, the British government's top scientist, Sir David King, suggested that the effects of climate change were '*far more dangerous than international terrorism*'.³ In 2007, a group of top American military leaders issued a statement arguing that '*Climate change will act as a 'threat multiplier' that will make water scarcity and food insecurity more intractable and threaten American national security interests*'.⁴

During an African Union (AU) conference in 2007, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda referred to climate change as 'an act of aggression by the developed world against the developing world and demanded compensation for the damage

3 BBC News, 'Global Warming: 'Biggest threat'', 9 January, 2004.

4 David, McNew, *Climate Change Worries Military Advisers*, National Public Radio (NPR), 16 April, 2007.

caused to Africa.⁵ A few months later, the Namibian representative to the United Nations (UN) referred to the developed countries emission of greenhouse gases as tantamount to, 'low intensity biological or chemical warfare'.⁶

There has been a growing acceptance among scientists, politicians and policy makers that climate change threatens to exacerbate the existing drivers of conflict in a way that could roll back development across many countries. The conflict in Darfur has in part been driven by climate change and environmental degradation. It has also been noted that rainfall in the Sahel has declined by 30% over the last forty years and that the Sahara Desert has been expanding by a mile every year.⁷

There are a number of environmental security challenges in Somalia: climate change, population pressure, resource-based conflicts and rapid urbanization. Today, the most notable environmental security problems in Somalia include global warming leading to climate change; water pollution leading to human health problems; deforestation resulting in desertification; destruction of species; depletion of ozone layer; and increasing urban industrial waste; among others. Human activity and lifestyle in Somalia is changing the environment in ways and on a scale quite unlike any other era, placing humanity's common future in jeopardy.⁸ No comprehensive research has been carried out to determine the extent of environmental change and its effects in Somalia. Though many Somalis may have noted changes in temperatures and rainfall, they are likely to attribute these to divine interventions due to failure of mankind.⁹

Environmental insecurity has significant impact on men, women and children since it affects economic, health and cultural securities, among others. Environmental problems occur in the interaction between two complex

5 Clark, A., Climate Change Threatens Security, UK tells UN. *The Guardian*, 18 April, 2007

6 United Nations Security Council, *UNSC holds first ever debate on impact of climate change on peace, security bearing over 50 speakers*, UNSC 5663rd meeting, 17 April, 2007, <http://www.un.org/news/docs/2007/sc.9000.doc.htm>, accessed July 24, 2013.

7 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Sudan: *Post- Conflict Environmental Assessment*, 2007.

8 IUCN, Country Environmental Profile - Somalia, 2006, p. 23.

9 Hartmann, Ingrid and Ahmed J. Sugulle, (2009), *The Impact of Climate Change on Pastoral Societies of Somaliland*. Candlelight for Health, Education and Environment, p. 16.

systems: human and ecological. The lack of basic human necessities in Somalia partly due to population pressure and deforestation now contributes to regional insecurity.¹⁰ The environment is yet to be recognized as the foundation for sustainable development by the federal governments of Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, as indicated by their development plans. The international development community has also not placed the environment as a central pillar of sustainable peace and security in Somalia.¹¹ It has also been noted that less than 25% of peace agreements address environmental management. Recognition of the role that resources play in national security and development would increase political recognition and factoring of natural resources in peace, security and development planning.

1.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

A number of scholars have viewed environmental change as a security issue (Diamond, 2005; Cassils, 2004; Bauch, 2003 and Homer-Dixon, 2000). This view is held by most environmental civil society and global opinion leaders as demonstrated by the granting of the Nobel Prize to the late Professor Wangari Maathai, former US Vice President Al Gore and the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This premise holds that environmental degradation and scarcity bring about conflict over scarce resources such as land, water and pasture.

The relationship between the concepts of ‘environmental security’, ‘collective security’, and ‘human security’, (Redclift, 2001) has also been explored. A report by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA), argues that ‘environmental stress heightens tensions, leading to possible conflict (MEA, 2003: 79). Environmental stress has been manifested through rise in sea levels, drought, famine and hurricanes (Schwartz and Randall, 2003). The proposition that there is a relation between environment and conflict is disputed by some scholars, (Binningsbo, De Soysa and Gleditsch, 2007), as lacking in theoretical and empirical evidence.

10 Colonel W. C. King, (2000), Understanding International Environmental Security: A Strategic Military Perspective, AEPI-IFP-1100 A, p.106.

11 IUCN, Country Environmental Profile - Somalia, 2006, p.8.

Other scholars have followed the old Malthusian theory which proposes that a rise in population may at a certain stage cause conflict when resources cannot march population growth (Homer-Dixon, 1999, Renner, 1996). The supposed collapse of societies such as Somalia is attributed to ecological scarcity more than other conflict-causing factors such as politics, culture and failed economies (Diamond, 2005). In their investigation of the relation between environment and conflict, Hauge and Ellingson (1998) found modest but significant effect on scarcity variables. However, this outcome was criticized by De Soysa (2002) as using two variables that are not enough to capture scarcity.

The emergence of new technologies has increased the rate of food production and therefore the ability to cope with increased population. However, technology also produces toxic gases that hamper the ability of the environment to produce life sustaining products. Other theories based on natural resources have associated the presence of easily lootable minerals with the onset of civil wars (Collier and Hoffman, 2000). The conflicts that affected Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo are cited as evidence of this proposition. Other scholars have argued that countries that are dependent on one primary export commodity such as oil for more than one third of their exports are more likely to experience conflict (Fearon, 2005).

Other scholars assert that ‘securitization’ of the environment increases the political pressure to act (Lodgaard, 2000), while still others are opposed to securitization arguing that this leads to politicization of the subject and therefore limits the range of options for conflict resolution (Buzan, Waver and De Wilde, 1998). Yet other scholars have asserted that politicization of environmental security is not necessarily negative since it makes politicians place environmental issues high on their public agenda (Buzan, Waver and De Wilde, 1998: 15). Given the multiple academic positions on the subject, there is need for a comprehensive and multi-level approach to environmental security.

There are many authors who have associated environmental issues with conflict. James Lee identified 70 modern conflicts related to environmental issues while James Gleick identified 17 conflicts that are associated with environment from

1945-1997.¹² Many internal conflicts in Ethiopia and Haiti have been associated with environmental degradation. Ethiopia's land surface was 45% forested in 1900 and today only about 2.4% is forested.¹³ Haiti was also well covered with forests but today it has been reduced to barren land with a very high population. Environmental security has proved to be an important variable in national or regional stability. According to Michael Renner (1989):

‘Environmental degradation imperils nations’ most fundamental aspect of security by undermining the natural support systems on which all of human activity depends.’

1.5 What Does Environmental Security Mean?

Environmental security has been conceptualized as the next global security threat after the Cold war.¹⁴ The victim in this case is the individual rather than the state. As such, threats on the environment have implications for the global human community. Environmental security includes not only sustainable utilization and protection of the environment but also minimization of the risks of environmental change.¹⁵ Environmental security is also defined as a normative linkage designed to cope with the negative effects of human activities on the environment.¹⁶

1.6 Role of Peace Support Operations in Environmental Security

Peace Support Operations have a long term goal of promoting regional security and preventing and/or reducing conflicts or mitigating the adverse impacts of environmental change.¹⁷ In many countries, the responsibility of environmental

12 James Lee (1999), *Inventory of Conflict and Environment*. Atlanta, GA: AEPI, and Peter Gleick (1998), *The World's Water*, Washington DC, Island Press, pp.125-130.

13 Colonel W. Chris King (2000), *Understanding International Environmental Security: A Strategic Military Perspective*, p. 64.

14 Nina Graeger (1996), *Environmental Security?* Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 33, No. 1, pp. 109-116.

15 Lodgaard Sverre (2000), *Human Security: Concept and Conceptualization*, Oslo, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, p. 20.

16 Lothar Brock, (1991), *Peace through Parks: The Environment on the Peace Research Agenda*. Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 28, No. 4, p. 407.

17 Ibid. p. 14.

security falls under the docket of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources and other relevant ministries, agents and departments. In most cases there are no national strategic documents outlining the challenges posed by environmental insecurity and how to address them. Within the African peace and security architecture, the role of peace support operations in promoting environmental security is recognized. However, most peace support training centres do not have courses on environmental security and its effects on peace and security. This may partially be because peace support operations are geared toward responding to current complex security or emergency situations and rarely focus on long term conflict prevention.

Most of the environmentally related courses delivered by PSO training institutions focus on Unexploded Ordnances (UXO), Improvised Electronic Devices (IED), and Demining, Safe and Secure Environment. Peace support operations are not designed to support measures to prevent global warming, deforestation, soil erosion, dumping of toxic waste or urbanization. Given the significance of environmental factors, it is high time that PSOs incorporated aspects of environment both in training and field operations.

The field of environmental security is not quite well understood and there is no generally accepted global agreement on key aspects of the concept. However, there is a general agreement that human activities affect environmental security and therefore there is a need to prevent human action from causing or escalating environmental insecurity. It is also well recognized that environmental security is transnational and no country can put a barrier along its borders against effects of environmental insecurity.¹⁸ Norman Myers, an early environmental security scholar wrote in 1986:

‘...National security is not just about fighting forces and weaponry. It relates to watersheds, croplands, forests, genetic resources, climate and other factors that rarely figure in the minds of military experts and political leaders, but increasingly deserve, in their collectivity, to rank alongside military approaches as crucial in a nation’s security.’¹⁹

18 Ibid. p.11.

19 Norman Myers (1986), “The Environmental Dimension to Security Issues”. *The Environmentalist*, p.251

Environmental diplomacy is an important conflict prevention and peace keeping tool that can enhance environmental security. Peace support operation strategies and geo-political policies must reflect these changing dynamics. There is advancement in satellite monitoring technology for environmental change and new international regulatory regimes have been put in place to prevent environmental degradation.²⁰ Peace support operations will continue to be required in the aftermath of natural and man-made disasters to address conflicts triggered by environmental factors, and to assist in reconstruction after the conflict. They may also be involved in enforcement of global environmental agreements.

There is increasing pressure for Peace Support Operations to include the environment in conflict analysis and operations planning. Environmental conservation through use of energy-efficient technologies and transfer of knowledge is an effective diplomatic tool. The PSO can protect the troops and win the hearts and minds of local populations through responsible engagement with the environment. PSOs can also train on improved agricultural systems and alternative sources of energy.²¹

20 American Environmental Peace Institute (AEPI) (2009), *Worldwide Emerging Environmental Issues Affecting the U.S. Military*, p.7.

21 *Ibid.* p. 24.

2.0 Key Environmental Security Challenges

There is seemingly no effective legislation and policy on environmental conservation and protection of rare species. The infrastructure for conservation is also lacking. Due to the protracted conflicts, wildlife conservation is low priority in Somalia for environmental conservation. Though there were 11 Wildlife conservation areas declared in the 1970s, there has not been any protection offered since the collapse of government in 1991.²²

2.1 Climate Change and Desertification

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change refers to ‘*any change in climate over time whether due to natural variability or human activity.*’²³ It has been stated that ‘Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate change and climate variability, due to multiple stresses and low adaptive capacity’.²⁴ Effects of climate change such as change in weather patterns, loss of livelihoods, declining rainfall, and increased drought and famine have a bearing on social or political stability. Climate change and resource scarcity have created new geo-political areas of concern and instability. Somalia’s fall into the failed state status partially has a bearing on environmental security.

Projections of warming in Africa are placed between 0.2 and 0.5 degrees centigrade per decade.²⁵ Though there has been increased rain in East Africa, it is irregularly distributed both geographically and season-wise, therefore it is unreliable for crop farming. It has been predicted that crop yields of wheat, rice and maize will drop by 30% in Somalia and across the Sahel region by 2030.²⁶ Though the causes and consequences are well known and predictable,

22 IUCN, Country Environmental Profile for Somalia, 2006, p. 27.

23 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2007), *Climate Change: Synthesis Report*. Valencia, Spain, p. 30.

24 Ibid. p.33

25 World Wildlife Fund (2006), *Climate Change Impacts on East Africa: A Review of the Scientific Literature*, p. 2.

26 IUCN (2006), *Country Environmental Profile for Somalia*, p. 16.

there has not been a very efficient response strategy and the response does not match the growing environmental threats. OXFAM predicts that the number of people that will be affected by climate change disasters will increase by 54% to reach about 375 million people per year by 2015. This could potentially overwhelm the global humanitarian capacity²⁷ and PSOs could be overstretched when disasters happen on a large scale. Somalia has no capacity to manage the effects of floods, tsunamis and protracted droughts. The greater part of Somalia's land surface is classified as desert. Desertification in Somalia has been caused by both man-made and natural factors. Loss of vegetation cover reduces the land carrying capacity especially for enough livestock for food security.

2.2 Poverty

Over 50% of the Somali people live below the poverty line of 1\$ per day and 80% of the people live on less than 2\$ per day.²⁸ There is more poverty in rural than urban areas due to accessibility to foreign remittances by urban inhabitants. Poverty has been exacerbated by the protracted conflict, drought and high costs of imported foods. The high rate of poverty has translated to wanton destruction of resources such as forests and woodlands through charcoal trade, and clearing of forests for irrigation and agriculture. Poor infrastructure, famine and diseases have claimed thousands of human lives. Cholera and Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) are common diseases.²⁹ Poverty is intertwined with environmental degradation and conflict which in turn contribute to increased poverty. Somalia's per capita income is (US\$226), compared to Kenya's (US\$280) but it is higher than Ethiopia and Eritrea's. The large flow of foreign remittances makes Somalia fare better than would be expected. About 43% of the people are exposed to extreme poverty compared to Kenya and Ethiopia's 23%.³⁰

27 American Environmental Peace Institute (AEPI) (2009), p. 15.

28 FAO Somalia Strategy and Plan of Action (2011-15), *World without Hunger*, p. 8.

29 Anja, Christina B. and Eva, S. (2012), Environment and Climate Change. Policy Brief: Somalia. SIDA, p. 11.

30 Op.cit, FAO, World without Hunger, p. 5.

2.3 Poor Resource Management and Environmental Degradation

The three regions of South Central Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland do not have integrated legislations and policies that specifically deal with environmental conservation. The formal and traditional systems of resource management collapsed during the war. The collapse of traditional and formal land regulation mechanisms has meant that the gun has replaced the title deed as security of tenure in some areas. There are also cases of over-exploitation and illegal utilization of natural resources. Degradation of catchments, range areas, agricultural lands and the marine environment coupled with illegal fishing, are the top issues of concern. These factors reduce ability to meet livelihood needs and hinder local and international trade.³¹

2.4 Land Mines and Unexploded Ordinances (UXO)

There are still many areas with mines that are a danger to people and livestock, especially in Somaliland and Puntland. The number of mines in Somaliland is estimated at between 1-2 million and Puntland 25-50,000.³² There are still the mines planted during the Ogaden war along the Somalia/Ethiopia border which have not been cleared. According to UNDP, Somalia has managed to recover more than 1.3 million square meters of mined land in Puntland and Somaliland.³³ Many unexploded ordinances (UXO) have also been destroyed in Hargeisa and Berbera.

2.5 Illegal and Unregulated Fishing (IUU)

The long Somalia coastline is rich in many species of fish. However, this resource has been undermined by unregulated and illegal fishing by international vessels. It is estimated that in 2002 alone, the fish catches in Somalia waters was 60,000 tonnes of which about half was taken by foreign fishing vessels.³⁴ Local fishing is small scale and the Federal Government of Somalia has no capacity

31 IUCN, 2006, p. 8.

32 UNICEF, 2000.

33 UNDP- Somalia, 2006.

34 Illegal Fishing in Somalia, Report of the University of British Columbia, 2012. <http://www.seaaroundus.org/project/htm>.

to protect its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) from illegal fishing. The fishing industry is not well regulated and managed due to low capacity of the central government. Due to the strains on the livestock industry and emergence of IDPs, there is a growing interest in fish as an alternative source of protein. The domestic annual fish turn-over is estimated at 18,000 tonnes compared to the existing potential of 200,000 tonnes; an indication of a potential for export. Despite this potential, combined with the presence the high value fish species such as Mackerel and Tuna along its coastline, fishing inside Somalia is still practiced as a subsistence activity.³⁵

2.6 Mining and Trade in Environmental Products

Somalia is not a party to the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), a global system that provides procedures for sustainable exploitation of natural resources. Somalia is also not a member of the Forest Law Enforcement and Trade (FLEGT) process. The country therefore loses international assistance in extraction and trade in key environmental products since it is not a signatory to crucial treaties.

2.7 Disposal of Hazardous Waste

Most toxic waste materials originate from the industrialized countries, some of who have taken advantage of the collapse of the state and government in Somalia to dump toxic waste along its shores.³⁶ The substances, which are injurious to living organisms and human beings, and are a source of contamination of water, air and food, have adversely affected the Somali population. Explosives and weapons also release toxic gases into the atmosphere.³⁷

The Gulf of Aden is a major route for international oil transport through which 590 million litres of oil pass. This poses a great danger of oil spillage.

35 Anja, Christina B. and Eva, S., Environment and Climate Change, Policy Brief, Somalia. SIDA, 2012, p. 12 and Report of the UN Secretary General on the Protection of Somalia Natural Resources and Water, 2011, p. 6.

36 In 1992, Italian and Swiss firms were reported to be dumping waste in Somalia waters sometimes in collaboration with warlords (see Abdullahi E. M. (2001), *Somalia's Degrading Environment: Causes and Effects of Deforestation and Hazardous Waste Dumping in Somalia*, p. 14.

37 Colonel W. Chris King, Understanding International Environmental Security: A Strategic Military Perspective, p.71

The new government of Somalia has no capacity to deal with oil pollution. Current statistics indicate that international shipping lines discharge as much as 33,000 tonnes of oily ballast along the Somali coast annually.³⁸ Illegal dumping of oil and toxic waste by international fleets is a danger to marine life along the coast of Somalia. Cyclones, heavy waves and tsunamis have also caused loss of lives, property and pollution along the Somalia coast.³⁹ There have also been cases of dumping of radioactive materials in the Indian Ocean along the Somali border. This may help explain the increasing cases of cancer, mouth sores, peculiar skin diseases, nose bleeding and livestock deaths in Somalia in the last few years.⁴⁰

2.8 Urbanization

Due to increased farming and/or food production, infrastructure growth, relative security and swelling stream of returnees from the Somali diaspora, there has been a rise in urban settlements in the whole of Somalia. Growing urban areas attract charcoal burning as a source of energy. This in turn produces effluents, some of which find their way into the ocean. Many residential and commercial buildings have been erected, translating to more use of wood and other resources for construction, energy and domestic consumption. These have had devastating consequences on the forest cover of Somalia. Systems of waste management and disposal collapsed during the war. Littering the environment with plastic bags has also become a source of concern.⁴¹

2.9 Deforestation

Forests cover about 11.4% of Somalia's land area. Flood plain forests along major river banks have been cleared for irrigated farming. Forests are home to more than 1,000 species of animals and more than 3,000 species of plants in Somalia. Since the onset of the conflict in 1991, it is estimated that the country has lost about 14% of its forests whereas about 87% of the people depend on wood fuel for their energy needs.⁴² About 70% of the poor and middle income pastoralists

38 IUCN, 2007, p. 17.

39 Ibid. p. 19.

40 Abdullahi, E.M., *Somalia's Degrading Environment*, 2001, p. 15.

41 IUCN, 2006, p. 46.

42 Ibid. p. 47.

depend on charcoal to earn their living.⁴³ There is hardly any tree planting taking place to replenish the depleted forests. Charcoal export to the Gulf States is a danger to Somalia's environment. There have been conflicts between charcoal traders and communities that live near forests. The local people are aware of environmental effects of charcoal burning but state collapse has left the people with no choice but to depend on vulnerable sources of livelihood.⁴⁴

Deforestation, increase in population, migration, disease, famine, drought and flooding reduce food production and water supply. Due to the extensive deforestation in Somalia, desertification, drought and soil erosion have increased with climate change. The government of Siad Barre nationalized land in Somalia in 1975. Though the state did not have the power to enforce this law everywhere, it set the tradition of disrespecting private ownership of land, especially by those wielding a gun. Consequently, public owned forests became easy victims of exploitation after state collapse.⁴⁵

2.10 Water Scarcity and Poor Sanitation

The increased loss of vegetation cover due to over-grazing and deforestation has contributed to soil erosion and water scarcity. Currently, less than 30% of the population of Somalia has access to clean water.⁴⁶ Most of the water infrastructure has been neglected since 1991. There are also conflicts where development partners establish water schemes without understanding local conflict dynamics. There are no rivers in the north-eastern region where people depend on livestock.⁴⁷ In this region, privatization of water wells and rangelands has denied the majority of the people access to water and is a major cause of conflict. Although drought and irregular rainfall have become a common occurrence that results in scarcity of water, no effective management of water has been put in place. In 2008, only 23% of the people in urban areas and 6% in rural areas had access to sanitation facilities. Somalia is poised to have acute water shortages in future due to environmental

43 Ibid. p. 49.

44 Shukria, Dini, Addressing Charcoal Production, Environmental Degradation and Communal Violence in Somalia: The Use of Solar Cookers in Bander Beyla. *Conflict Trends*, 2005, p. 4.

45 Abdullahi, E.M., Somalia's Degrading Environment, 2001, p. 17.

46 Anja, Christina B. and Eva, S. (2012), Environment and Climate Change - Policy Brief Somalia, p. 8.

47 UN, Report of the UN Secretary General on the Protection of Somali Natural Resources and Water, 2011, p.3.

degradation and inappropriate land use systems.⁴⁸ Waste disposal in urban areas is poor due to break down of infrastructure and lack of maintenance. Often, waste water is swept into the sea or contaminates underground water. IOM and UN-Habitat have introduced projects for solid waste management but problems are projected once the funding stops.⁴⁹

2.11 Tse Tse Fly and Other Livestock Diseases

The Shabelle and Jubba valleys are heavily tse tse-infested, causing livestock diseases.⁵⁰ There are no governmental or other institutions working on the eradication of tse tse fly in the region. During the dry seasons, livestock is taken along river banks where overgrazing occurs and diseases increase. The area therefore does not effectively provide reserve pasture for the dry seasons as would be expected.

2.12 Impact of Environmental Insecurity

Since 2000, there have been more than 35 major conflicts in the world and some 2,500 disasters affecting over 2 billion people. At least 18 conflicts since 1960 have been related to natural resources/environmental degradation and 40% since 1960 have been related to resources.⁵¹ The UN estimates that US\$ 86 billion will be required to help poor countries adapt to global warming. Other international aid group put this figure at US\$ 50 billion per year. The international community has pledged about US\$ 18 billion to Somalia to combat the effects of global warming, but only \$1 billion has been disbursed.⁵² Studies have indicated that the cost of prevention is higher than responding to disasters. Though most refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Somalia are usually associated with conflict, there is also an environmental contribution that makes it difficult for people to eke out a living in the depleted and barren land. Environmental degradation in Somalia has caused movement of people from the dry lands to river valleys, a fact that has increased tensions and conflicts in those areas.⁵³

48 Ibid., p.3.

49 Ibid., p.4.

50 Ibid. p. 58.

51 American Environmental Peace Institute (AEPI), 2009, p. 27.

52 Ibid. p. 27.

53 Environmental refugees are people who leave their areas of residence because they cannot sustain their livelihoods due to environmental agents such as drought, soil erosion, desertification, deforestation, population pressure and poverty.

3.0 Managing Environmental Security

As observed earlier in this study, due to the absence of a national government for many years, there is no national framework for environmental and natural resource management. There is also a weak legislative and policy environment and enforcement of existing instruments is lacking.⁵⁴ However, the Transitional Federal Government set up the Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Environment in 2010 and Disaster Management Agency in 2011. The governments of Somaliland and Puntland have also established relevant regulatory regimes and institutions for environmental management.⁵⁵

3.1 International Environmental Protection Regime

There has been an improvement in international environmental governance through improved regulations and efficiency of existing regulatory mechanisms. Multilateral cooperation has also been strengthened among various countries and organizations. However, many governments have not yet ratified a number of environmental protection instruments. Somalia is signatory to a number of international conventions that regulate use and management of natural resources, including International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).⁵⁶ A number of other international and regional agreements have not been ratified such as the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Somalia has not signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Kyoto protocol, though it signed the Vienna Convention of 2001.⁵⁷

Somalia has also not signed the Basel Convention on Hazardous Waste. Somalia is a member of FAO's South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission, an important forum for seeking protection of Somalia's fishery and marine resources. There is also the Global Task Force on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

54 IUCN, Country Environmental Profile, 2006, p. 2.

55 UN Report of the UN Secretary General on the Protection of Somali Natural Resources and Water, 2011, p. 7.

56 Ibid. p. 13.

57 Ibid. p. 16.

which can also assist in preventing illegal exploitation of Somalia's marine resources. Somalia has no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) policy or legislation. However, Somaliland has a programme on EIA which uses global guidelines.⁵⁸ The little EIAs carried out are done by international NGOs and are often sectoral and piecemeal. These international instruments can only make a difference if there are domestic legal and institutional mechanisms to support their implementation. Somalia therefore, requires regional and international support to implement these instruments.

The Eastern Africa Association for Impact Assessment (EAAIA) can be a good source of information and good practices that Somalia can borrow from. There are efforts to develop disaster management policies, strategies and action plans in Somaliland and Puntland.⁵⁹ However, these plans need to be harmonized with the mandate and policies of relevant ministries.

3.2 The Geneva Convention

Environment is protected under Protocol 1 of the Geneva Convention. However, this provision is always violated during war and armed conflict. In most conflict areas, water wells, farms and food stores are destroyed, forests cut down, soils poisoned and animals killed in order to gain military advantage.⁶⁰ Since lasting peace in Somalia depends on restoration of ecological conditions that support livelihoods, the scope of peace support operations especially driven by the United Nations is bound to expand.

3.3 The Basel Convention

The Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal is a comprehensive treaty for control of hazardous waste disposal. Established in 1989, It came into force in 1992 and

58 EIAs and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) are important tools for planning and decision making in environmental conservation and good governance for sustainable development (IUCN Eastern Africa Regional Office, 2000).

59 IUCN Report, (2006), p. 24.

60 UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon speaking during the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict, November 6, 2008.

135 countries are signatory to it. Somalia is not a signatory. The treaty limits movements of hazardous waste far away from its source.⁶¹

3.4 The Montreal Protocol

The Montreal Protocol is an agreement reached in 1987 to control Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) that had been identified as a cause of global warming. This was the first time countries agreed to impose significant costs on their economies in order to protect the global atmosphere. There were significant differences between the developed and developing countries' demands but eventually, 74 developing countries signed the protocol after receiving economic guarantees from the North.⁶² This treaty was an important beginning in addressing global climate change that has more impact in the South/developing world.

3.5 International Law of the Sea

The 1982 United Nations International Law of the Sea sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas should be carried out. Somalia ratified the convention in 1989. It entered into force in Somalia in 1994. By 2011, there were 162 signatories including the European Union. This convention provides for protection of marine environments, establishment of maritime zones, and the rights and obligations of states. The law also sets out the legal framework for combating piracy and armed robberies at sea.⁶³ The law also provides for Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) not exceeding 200 nautical miles from the coastline where a country can exploit and manage resources. Therefore exploitation of fishing resources and disposal of hazardous waste along this zone in Somalia was in contravention of this law. However, Somalia domestic laws have not been harmonized with this convention. The International Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing was initiated by FAO in 2009 under the umbrella of the

61 The Basel Convention on the Control of Trans boundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal, www.basel.int, accessed July 10, 2013.

62 UNEP (2012), The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. www.unep.org/new_site/en/montreal_protocol.php.

63 UN (2011) Report of the UN Secretary General on the Protection of Somali Natural Resources and Water, p.7

United Nations. The agreement has so far been signed by 23 countries including the European Union. The convention is supported by an implementation plan that provides guidelines for implementation of articles in the agreement.⁶⁴ These provisions cannot seal all the loopholes in illegal fishing and signatory countries are required to domesticate these provisions in their legal and policy frameworks. This has not happened in Somalia so far.

3.6 The Nairobi Convention

The Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern Africa Region provides a legal framework for the 13 member countries of which Somalia is a signatory. The treaty was established in 1996 and came into force in 2010 with some amendments.⁶⁵ The convention is meant to promote sustainable environmental management as well as protection of marine and coastal resources in the region. As such, the convention provides legislative guidance on prevention and monitoring of pollution, and provision of maritime emergency response. Somalia has not made use of this instrument due to the state of political instability discussed elsewhere in this paper.

3.7 International Organizations

There are a number of international organizations that can assist Somalia in coping with environmental degradation. UN agencies such as World Food Programme (WFP), UNHCR and FAO provide support in areas controlled by the Federal government, Somaliland and Puntland. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has drafted guidelines advising governments to ensure they respect Somalia's EEZ and to report illegal activities from other countries. IOM assists countries to implement the Djibouti Code of Conduct, an instrument for controlling piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean. Somalia is a signatory to the Djibouti Code. IOM is assisting Somalia to develop capacity of implementing the various international instruments to protect its EEZ.⁶⁶

64 Ibid. p. 10.

65 http://www.unep.org/Nairobiconvention/The_Convention/Nairobi_Convention_Text/index.asp.

66 Op. Cit, UN (2011), p.11.

3.8 Regional Support

Somalia can benefit from the support of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Though IGAD has been supporting political stabilization, it can be a good launching pad for comprehensive regional agreements on the management of trans-boundary ecosystems and issues. These would include the Shabelle and Jubba river basins, livestock industry, cross-border trade, and cross-border forest and marine resources. Harmonious cross-border resource management can increase economic and social development in member countries.

4.0 Strategies of Environmental Security in Somalia

This section analyses the approaches and strategies for environmental security in Somalia. Environmental security in Somalia requires a broad political, social and economic approach that factors in environmental management in the reconstruction of Somalia and setting up a durable foundation for peace and security. Environmental management plans can form a critical pillar of national development plans to alleviate poverty, reduce conflicts and increase the rate of economic growth. The international community has a major role to play in influencing change of international actors towards overfishing and dumping of toxic waste along Somalia's waters and on land. The United Nations and the European Union can exert pressure on a global scale while regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and IGAD in collaboration with the Somali federal government, and the governments of Somaliland and Puntland can support local mechanisms for protection of marine and coastal ecosystems. Building the capacity of communities to cope with the adverse effects of climate change has been found to be effective.⁶⁷ This involves protection and diversification of the means of livelihoods, access to and availability of key natural resources. These and support for traditional conflict resolution mechanisms need to be done in Somalia.

4.1 Risk Management, Early Warning and Response Systems

Conflict early warning and early response mechanisms can be sewn into the local conflict resolution systems. This improves community ability to cope with environmental stress. Improvement of resource management in general can also go a long way in preventing the effects of climate change. There are a number of global early warning and response systems in place in Somalia such as: Famine Early Warning Systems (FEWS), FAO's Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU), FAO Somalia Water and Land Information Management Unit (SWALIM) and IGAD's Climate Prediction and Application Centre.

⁶⁷ Brown, O., Anne H., and Robert, M. (2007), *Climate Change as the 'New' Security Threat: Implications for Africa. International Affairs, Vol. 83, No. 6 and Africa and Security*, 1141-1154, p.12.

4.2 Environmental Legislative and Policy Framework

The policy and legislative system for protection of the environment is weak in South Central Somalia. Puntland and Somaliland have better systems since they have been more politically stable. Somaliland has policies for regulation and promotion of animal production, forest, water, environment, rangelands and education. There are also legislations such as Environmental conservation Act (1998) and National Water Act. However, there is weak institutional capacity to support implementation of these instruments. Somaliland also established the National Environmental Research and Disaster Preparedness Authority (NERAD) in 2003. This institution has the potential to lead environmental management activities in the country.

Puntland has a Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Environment, a Ministry of Fisheries, Ports and Marine Transport, and a policy and strategic plan (2004). A five-year development plan that includes the environment was developed through the support of UNDP Somalia. In this regard, it is important to update the old acts and policies that existed before the collapse of the Somalia government in 1991 since this is necessary to improve environmental management in South Central Somalia.

4.3 Devolved Governance

Local communities have been the custodians of natural resources at the grassroots level in the absence of central government. For this reason, it is important for the envisaged land use management to begin at the village level and be reflected at the district, regional and finally, national government levels. Devolved land management empowers the traditional system that the Somali are more familiar with to resolve land disputes. Land and property disputes resulting from the long war are major hurdles to national integration and peace. Many public services have now been placed in private hands. Understanding the position of women in the new Somalia's political, economic and social development is important in order to bring on board a large section of society in environmental management.⁶⁸

The introduction and promotion of new sources of energy other than wood and innovations such as energy-efficient cooking stoves, solar and wind energy

68 IUCN, *Country Environmental Profile for Somalia*. Nairobi: The European Commission Somalia Office, 2006, p. 9.

would go a long way in reducing wood resource dependence and by extension, depletion. Charcoal burning should be controlled and well managed. Improved methods of charcoal burning and improving tree management to ensure that trees are replaced can reduce wastage. Community-driven environmental conservation processes that take cognizance of social values and indigenous knowledge systems should be supported in Somalia. Devolved environmental governance would provide for structures that enhance local participation.

4.5 Protection of Fisheries and Other Marine Resources

Control of illegal fishing through international lobbying and improvement of the local fishing industry would increase the contribution of fishing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Protection of coral reefs, islands and mangroves that run across a large part of the coastline of South Central Somalia can be enhanced with assistance from the international community. Under the provision of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the EU could assist Somalia in creating a more sustainable and nationally beneficial fishing industry. Recognition of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) in collaboration with local communities is vital for species propagation and protection. Puntland has established marine protection areas that can serve as a good example to the rest of Somalia.

4.6 Conservation of Forests and Woodlands

It will take some time and resources to restore a sizeable part of Somalia's forests and woodlands. A number of options can be explored such as agro-forestry, conservation and sustainable utilization of forest products. The government of Somalia would require auditing the inventory of woodlands and forests. Establishment and implementation of laws and policies for proper management of resources can form a strong foundation for the country's recovery.

4.7 Environmental Conservation

Protection of Somalia's impressive but threatened biodiversity is urgent. This would entail making conservation part of community livelihood activities. Traditional mechanisms of resource control can be harmonized with formal laws to create synergy and a more effective regulatory environment. Completion of the proposed

National Environment Strategy and Action Plan (NEAP) and National Bio-diversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) will enhance national economic development and conservation. Conservation of water catchment areas including management of river basins is vital for water-scarce Somalia to improve water retention and vegetation cover. Improved water collection systems such as rainwater harvesting, improvement of hygiene and sanitation, and using education to inculcate the value of conservation will be crucial ingredients of environmental management.

4.8 Role of Civil Society

Though there are a number of civil society organizations working on environmental issues in Somalia, they are still relatively few and with low capacity since there is limited funding for environmental conservation. There is some collaboration between government and civil society in implementing environmental projects. Some NGOs such as Horn Relief, OXFAM, MERLIN, German Agro Action, Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa, Somali Red Crescent and Agricultural Development Organization (ADO); have strong environmental components such as control of communicable diseases, food security, natural resource management, provision of piped water and livestock management.⁶⁹

4.9 Role of the Private Sector

The private sector has assumed the provision of public services that were formally provided by the government. There is impressive use of technology by companies that provide communication services, money transfer, transportation and import/export services. The private sector rarely factors in environmental issues without external incentives because this does not always translate to profit. It will be important to find space for Somalia's private sector to provide innovative solutions to environmental insecurity. The Private-Public Partnerships (PPP) framework can be a viable strategy for reconstruction in Somalia. FAO has partnered with a number of private sector firms to provide education, water, food and employment to the Somali. This cooperation enables foreign intervention and private sector to be relevant to socio-economic needs of the people, and provide information and feedback necessary for program adjustment.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ibid. IUCN, 2006, p. 38

⁷⁰ FAO (2011), Somalia Strategy and Plan of Action (2011-15), World without Hunger, FAO, p. 53.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Beyond the visible open crisis of governance in Somalia lies a more threatening challenge of managing environmental security that continues to be abused by local and international actors and for which no substantial investment is being made today.

Given the current socio-economic and political situation in Somalia, the country requires a stabilization strategy that does not only aim at restoring stability but also building a sound political, economic and social future. The formal state building principles and the informal traditional structures are not enough to reconstruct a new Somalia. Institutional transformation is required to realize organic adaptation. Strategies of adaptation should be well mainstreamed in development planning in which environmental management is a central element.

This study has identified a need for Peace Support Operations to enlarge their training and field operations to accommodate all the vital aspects of environmental security. This is the approach that captures the hidden drivers of the Somali conflict. No effective and sustainable solution to the Somali conflict can afford to ignore environmental security. Generating options and supporting environmental security management are effective conflict prevention measures since they address the root causes of conflict.

Local, regional and international environmental actors must collaborate as provided for in the Kampala process for control of illegal fishing, harnessing resources and building goodwill for the implementation of a comprehensive environmental policy, legislation and action plans. A case has also been made for environmental management to be anchored in proper legislation and policy to enhance implementation of conservation activities.

Recommendations

- There is need for the Federal Government of Somalia, with assistance from the international community, to undertake strategic environmental assessment in the country in order to design an effective environmental management framework.
- The government must also bring along the renegade regions of Somaliland, Puntland, Galmudug and Jubbaland in this initiative since environmental challenges affect the whole country.
- As established by Andrew Whitford and Karen Wong (2009), there is a relationship between democracy and environmental security. General improvement of governance in Somalia is a pre-requisite for sustainable environmental security in the country.
- There is need for Somalia to accede to international maritime treaties, including International Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) and regional marine conventions that it has not signed to draw international support to the protection of its marine resources. Somalia can launch claims of compensation from international firms that have been depositing hazardous waste on its territory. There should be capacity for monitoring environmental changes and their expected impact. Somalia should participate in international environmental management processes and decision making organs.
- Peace Support Operations in Somalia must develop a strategy for anchoring environmental security in their general peace and security stabilization frameworks. The realization of Somalia's immense fishing potential is necessary to provide resources for employment and development of the country.
- Technological solutions to deforestation such as the introduction of solar cookers in Bander Beyla in Puntland provide hope for alternative sources of energy that can ameliorate the pressure on woodlands.⁷¹

⁷¹ Shukria, Dini, Addressing Charcoal Production, Environmental Degradation and Communal Violence in Somalia: The Use of Solar Cookers in Bander Beyla. *Conflict Trends*, 2005, p. 5.

- Civil society and the private sector should be incorporated in environmental management.
- Environmental resources should be captured in data collection and processing that is used in national development planning. This would attract funding and enhance implementation of environmental projects.

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Impact of Armed Conflict on Women in Somalia

Lt Col Joyce Chelan'gat Sitienei

1.0 Introduction

Armed conflict on any scale can have devastating effects on a society. Women, men and children suffer consequences that affect them at personal, communal and national levels. In recent years, the complexities experienced by women in armed conflict situations have received tremendous attention on the international platform. What has become the incontestable character of contemporary intra-state violence is that women are the victims, though not necessarily the targets of conflict. In every violent conflict situation, it is the women that are left to bear the brunt. They are invariably vulnerable to violent attacks and raids, disease, epidemics, hunger and starvation, slow death, violent death, disruption of their lives and displacement. Women and children often constitute the largest number of people who are internally displaced in their own countries and refugees in neighboring states. The over two decades of severe armed conflict in Somalia attest to this with great impacts on women. The report of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) reiterates that: *“International humanitarian law, which prohibits attacks on civilians, is at times systematically ignored, and human rights are often violated in armed conflict, affecting the civilian population, especially women, children, the elderly and disabled”*⁷². Unfortunately, this has been the case in Somalia, where the long duration of sustained armed conflict characterized by extreme violation of both human rights and international humanitarian law has left Somali women vulnerable to the dictates of armed conflict.

⁷² Commission on the Status of Women, Forty- Second Session, 2-13 March 1998, Thematic Issues before the Commission on the Status of Women, Report of the Secretary-General.

This paper seeks to analyze the key factors that threaten the peace and security of women in Somalia. The paper addresses the impact of violence on women and the role of government, civil society and the international community in addressing the protection of women in conflict situations. The paper is divided into 5 sections. Section 1 spells out the trajectory of the study. Section 2 provides theoretical analysis about the relationship between armed conflict and women. Section 3 reviews the impact of armed conflict on women in Somalia, Section 4 explores the capacity of the Somalia National Government and International community to prevent and manage violence against women, and Section 5 provides the conclusion and recommendations.

1.1 Focus and Scope

This paper addresses the key factors that threaten the peace and security of women in Somalia. It analyses the impact of violence on women and the role of government, civil society and the international community in addressing the plight of women in conflict situations.

1.2 Objectives

- To examine how war and violence have affected the lives of women in Somalia;
- To identify the challenges faced by women in peace-building and the role of civil society and international organizations in the protection of women in conflict situations; and
- To assess the capacity of the national government and international community to prevent and manage violence against women in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace?

1.3 Guiding Questions

- What is the impact of war and violence on the lives of women in Somalia?

- What are the challenges faced by women in peace–building and what is the role of civil society and international organizations protecting women in conflict situations?
- How has the national Government, civil society and the International community responded to these challenges in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace?

1.4 Statement and Justification of the Problem

The armed conflict in Somalia is one of the most intractable conflicts in post-colonial Africa. Women have been the silent victims where the culture and hostile socio-cultural environment hinders their participation in seeking peace or protection. The rate of human rights violation in Somalia is painfully high, with women bearing the brunt. With over two decades of armed conflict in Somalia, the Somali women have been perpetually vulnerable to violent attacks and raids, disease, epidemics, hunger and starvation, slow death, violent death, disruption of their lives and displacement. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), there are about 1million registered Somalia refugees in the horn of Africa. As at November 2012, there were about 1.36 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Somalia (Refugee International Field Report Nov. 1 2012). Now that Somalia seems to have achieved some semblance of peace, it is important that the condition of women is addressed so that violence against them is brought to a stop, that victims of gender based violence are given a new lease of life and that they are given a place in the development of a new Somalia. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the measures taken by the Somalia government and the international community to reduce the negative consequences of the conflict on women.

2.0 Evolution of Armed Conflict in Somalia

2.1 Origins of Somalia Conflicts

The crisis in Somalia can be traced to the rapid union of the two (northern and southern) Somali territories to form the 'United' Somali state in 1960. Soon after independence, the Somaliland people became disillusioned with the way the union was proceeding and indeed voted 'No' in the unification referendum.⁷³ In the interest of preserving a 'union', Somaliland initially accepted the conditions set by the south's leaders. Mogadishu became the capital and the base of the newly created Somali parliament. Southern Somalis also held all major posts in the new government as well as a majority of seats in parliament.

In spite of the increasing discontent, Southern officials adopted measures aimed at enforcing rapid integration, serving to further alienate their northern counter-parts. The government's development programmes also failed to tackle the serious problems of underdevelopment and socioeconomic stratification in the North, which were key problems inherited from the colonial administration. Despite the integration of the two administrative systems, latent corruption was attributed to the lingering Italian influence in the public sector. However, Northerners were not the only group disillusioned with the union. The Rehanwein from the inter-riverine region, who had an equal number of seats with the two other major clan families of Hawiye and Darod in the south before unification, became marginalised. In the country's last multiparty elections held in March 1969, more than 60 parties contested. There was little civil governance or service delivery that existed. It was against this background that Siad Barre led a military junta that came to power after a coup d'état in 1969.

73 Adam H. M. (1994), 'Formation and Recognition of New States: Somaliland in Contrast to Eritrea', *Review of African Political Economy*, 59. (Vol. 21 No. 59)

2.2 Armed Conflicts in Somalia before 1991

During Somalia's first 17 years of independence (1960–77), there were no significant armed conflicts in the country. The first 10 years of independence were marked by vibrant but corrupt and eventually dysfunctional multiparty democracy. The coming to power by the military in a coup in 1969 was initially hailed with extensive support because of public disenchantment with the clannishness and snarl that had plagued politics under civilian rule. During the cold war, the regime led by Siad Barre recast the coup as a socialist revolution and built up one of the largest standing armies in sub-Saharan Africa with funds from international partners. However, his reign was met with significant challenges that sowed the seeds of armed conflict in Somalia. From 1977 to 1991, Somalia suffered three major armed conflicts, which left a lasting impact on the peace and security of the country.

The first was the Ogaden war or Somalia-Ethiopia war of 1977 – 1978. This was one of the largest inter-state wars in contemporary African history predominantly fought in the Ogaden region in eastern Ethiopia. This part of the Ethiopian plateau is mainly populated by Ogadeeni – literally ‘those of the plateau’.⁷⁴ President Siad Barre's ambition was to structurally weaken Ethiopian forces in the Ogaden. Somali forces intervened in support of Somali rebel fighters (Western Somali Liberation Front), ostensibly to liberate the Somali-inhabited region of the Ogaden. Unfortunately, when USSR and Cuba, originally supporters of Somalia, switched sides in support of Ethiopia, Somalia lost the war and suffered over 25,000 casualties.⁷⁵ This loss sowed the seeds of internal conflicts in Somalia. It prompted the rise of several Somali liberation movements which were bent on overthrowing the military regime of Siyad Barre, whom they held accountable for the debacle. The first of these movements was the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), established in 1978 by Abdullahi Yusuf. This mainly Majerten clan movement engaged the regime in sporadic skirmishes in the northeast of the country and was met with harsh repression.

74 Cerulli, E. (1957), Somalia. Scritti vari editi ed inediti. I: Storia della Somalia. L'Islam in Somalia, Il Libro Degli Zengi, Rome.

75 Ahmed Samatar, *Socialist Somalia: Rhetoric and Reality*. London: Zed Press, 1998.

In 1981, the Somali National Movement was formed by some members of the Isaaq clan following the Ogaden War. This was the movement that led Somalia into the second major armed conflict, which was the war between the Somali military and the Somali National Movement (SNM) for control of northwest Somalia. Their grievances stemmed from the 1980s, when the Barre regime placed the northwest under military control and used the military administration to crack down on the Isaaq and strip them of their businesses. During the war, government forces committed atrocities against civilians with an estimated 50,000 Somalis, mostly members of the Isaaq clan, the core support for the SNM, dying during the war. There were also aerial bombardments, which leveled the city of Hargeisa, with close to 400,000 Somalis forced to flee across the Ethiopian border as refugees, while another 400,000, mostly women and children, were internally displaced.⁷⁶ These atrocities fuelled Isaaq demands for secession in what became the self-declared state of Somaliland in 1991. This has however, received no international recognition by other states.

The third major armed conflict before 1991 was between the besieged government forces and several clan-based liberation movements. By 1989, several clan-based liberation movements had been formed with the intention of overthrowing Siad Barre's regime. Some of the strongest movements included the United Somali Congress (USC) of the Hawiye clan, the Somali Patriotic Movement (Ogadeni clan), and the Somali Salvation Democratic Movement (Majerten clan). These clans engendered a multi-front attack on the besieged government forces in 1989 and 1990 leading to untold casualties. This multi-fronted war ushered in the predatory looting and banditry that characterized the warfare in 1991–92.

2.3 Collapse of the State and Complex Political Emergency

The toppling of Siad Barre in 1991 was followed by a protracted period of violent chaos and warfare. Armed conflict spread across southern Somalia in 1991 and 1992, clan-based militias fought against each other over control of valuable towns, seaports, and neighborhoods. The wars, which began as struggle over government control, rapidly degenerated into predatory looting, banditry, and occupation of valuable real estate by conquering clan militias.

⁷⁶ Somalia: A Government at War with its Own People. New York: Africa Watch, 1990.

The intent of fighting shifted principally to secure war booty. The prime victims of this violence were weak agricultural communities and coastal minority groups that were caught in the middle of the fighting. Deprived of all their belongings, they faced a massive famine in late 1991 and early 1992. This prompted large international relief operations. The food aid which was meant to help the suffering and starving people soon became part of the war economy, a commodity over which militias fought and that warlords diverted to fund the wars. An estimated 250,000 Somalis lost their lives as a result of this war and famine. The war of 1991–92 also produced a powerful array of interests in perpetuating lawlessness and violence and blocking reconciliation.⁷⁷ Warlords' power bases depended on a chronic state of insecurity, such that their clan constituencies needed them for protection.⁷⁸ Illiterate gunmen saw war, plunder, and extortion as their only livelihood. Some businessmen were enriched by war-related criminal activities such as weapons sales and diversion of food aid. Clans were in possession of valuable urban and riverine real estate won by conquest, which they would lose if they opted for peace settlement. All this made it difficult for any comprehensive peace agreement to be reached in Somalia. War had become more beneficial than peace in southern Somalia.

Contrary to the war situation in the southern part of the country, in the Northwest and Northeast, the collapse of the central government did not breed prolonged violence and plunder as was the case in the South. Despite sporadic inter-clan clashes, including two serious wars in 1994 and 1996 in Somaliland, a more robust authority of traditional clan elders, greater political cohesion among the clans, more support from businessmen to support peace and subsidize demobilization, and more effective political leadership, emerged in Puntland and Somaliland. The fighting never devolved into anarchy and generalized violence. Instead, the self-declared state of Somaliland gradually began to build a modest capacity to govern, and a national assembly of traditional clan elders helped to manage the peace and keep the clan under control. In the Northeast, chronic inter-clan tensions were contained by traditional elders as well. In both regions, a modest economic recovery fuelled by import-export activities through their seaports helped to divert energies toward commerce and away from warfare.

⁷⁷ World Bank, Report on Conflict in Somalia: Drivers and Dynamics, 2005.

⁷⁸ Joakim, Gundel (2006), Humanitarian Action in the New Security Environment: Policy and Operational Implications in Somalia and Somaliland, 2006

3.0 The Impact of Armed Conflict on Somali Women

3.1 Social Impact

Since armed conflict broke out in Somalia in the 1960s, Somali women have continued to struggle with chronic human rights violations, food insecurity, poverty, disease, drought and severely limited educational and employment opportunities.

3.2 Sexual Violence

In August 2011, a UN official leading the fight against sexual violence in times of conflict voiced concern over reports that women and girls fleeing famine in Somalia were being raped or abducted and forced into marriage by bandits and other armed groups as they tried to reach refugee camps in Kenya.⁷⁹ The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 2013 country operations profile for Somalia states that:

“Living in unprotected and congested IDP settlements, women and girls are particularly exposed to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and are often denied access to assistance by IDP committee leaders or to adequate legal redress. SGBV perpetrators often live in impunity, due to a weak formal justice system.”

As women make up a larger proportion of the displaced population, the problems and difficulties facing IDPs have a different impact on women. As a result of the ongoing conflict in Somalia, the already weak infrastructure of the country keeps deteriorating and this is glaringly reflected in the health sector. According to UNICEF, Somalia has one of the highest maternal mortality and morbidity rates in the world, exacerbated by high rates of Female Genital Mutilation of up to 98 percent.⁸⁰

79 Report of the UN Human Rights Commission Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, 2003.

80 UNICEFSomalia, Facts and Figures (2012)

Widows and orphans persistently face problems carrying responsibilities as heads of families, often leading to sexual and economic exploitation and early marriage. Marital rape and sexual violence was described as rampant.⁸¹ The absence of a central authority means lack of political rights in Somalia. This supports the many unresolved human rights problems among Somali women which renders their abuse quite convenient to the perpetrators. According to UN Human Rights Commission Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, rape and sexualized violence were widespread in Somalia. Aggressors attack women from rival clans and ethnic minorities. Such occurrences are even more prevalent in displaced persons' camps. Since the collapse of education infrastructure in 1991, the gender gap in education is dramatically increasing. Twice as many boys compared to girls are entering primary school as cash strapped families choose to "invest" in sons over daughters.⁸²

3.3 Economic Impact

In traditional Somali society, women were seen as the backbone of the family, looking after the household and children, while the men protected and provided for the family and acted as decision makers and representatives in the community. However, the sustained armed conflict has eroded these traditional roles, forcing people to seek the protection of their clans. This has made most men and boys to join militias in defense of their clan with little possibility of returning to their families, thus leaving the women to shoulder the burden of the family. Consequently, Somali women have become more productive as they strive to provide for their children and the society. As a result of armed conflict, many women are continually faced not only with caring for their families without the safety net of the clan, but also without a male head of household.⁸³ Through this perceived weakness, the Somali women have eventually found strength. In the early stages of the conflict, Somali women were forced to leave home to make money to provide food, shelter, health care, and security for their children. In some regions, women banded together to provide for these basic necessities.

81 Country of Origin Information Service Somalia Country Report, 17 January 2012 (Para 21.14)

82 UNHRC, 2003

83 Ibrahim Nur, *Gender-Sensitive Programme Design and Planning in Conflict Affected Situations* (London: ACORD, 2002, p.7.

In Lower Shabelle, for instance, women began organizing traditional credit and savings schemes called *shollongo*, while in Northern Somalia (Hargeisa and Bosaso), women raised funds through local NGOs to establish and manage local police forces in order to create a secure environment.⁸⁴

The emergence of women as the primary economic contributor in the post-war period is not limited to women-headed households. Many married women have also become the main source of income for their households due to high unemployment among men. Generally, men are unwilling or unable to engage in low income opportunities, such as petty trade in local markets. In fact, women have assumed greater responsibility in the micro-economy due to the breakdown in socio-economic structures. According to the Center for Research and Dialogue (CRD), a variety of studies have found out that across Somalia, women now run over 80% of petty trade and small businesses, as well as running their own households.⁸⁵ Although there is little evidence that this dramatic socio-economic shift has translated into changes either in their economic status or their decision-making powers outside the family, it demonstrates an enhanced position for Somali women in the country.

The increased involvement of Somali women in trade can be seen as a reflection of economic necessity. In most cases, Somali women lack investment capital, and earn a subsistence income in harsh working conditions and insecure environments to support their families. This has been a major challenge to economic survival for Somali women. To combat this, women in Somalia have organized themselves into different associations that advocate for and protect their economic activities. Women's associations such as Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) manage a human rights, peace and development center in Mogadishu and have sponsored a micro-credit program for women and facilitated a reconciliation meeting between factions by mobilizing women from different clans and sub-clans to diffuse tensions.

84 Faiza, Jama Mohamed, *Somali Women's Role in Building Peace and Security*, (Speech before the ARRIA Formula Meeting on Women, Peace and Security, October 23, 2000).

85 Centre for Research and Dialogue (CRD), *Dialogue for Peace, Advancing the Involvement of Women in Peace-building in South-Central Somalia, Path to recovery - Building Sustainable Peace*, July 2012.

There are few agencies within Somalia that provide shelter and assistance. Siad Barre's government established the Somali Women's Democratic Organization (SWDO) in 1977 as the only official women's group in Somalia. The SWDO participated in numerous education and human rights campaigns, including a campaign to eradicate and educate about female genital mutilation. When the government fell in 1991, the SWDO dissolved paving the way for a new women's organization, IIDA, which until today supports low-income women and runs an elementary co-educational school and a weaving and crafts cooperative. It also provides food and other support services to hospitals. Most of its funding comes from donations from religious organizations and charities, as well as from a small donation by the US mission.

Somali women's activism and organizations in various communities in Somalia have been visible and continue to respond to the plight of the needy and traumatized (mostly women and children) in the country. Women in Somalia and Somaliland have developed their own networks under three major women's networks which unite over 90% of women's organizations: The Coalition of Grassroots Women's Organization (COGWO), NAGAAD in Somaliland and 'We are Women's Activists' (WAWA). They cooperate and carry out nationwide campaigns including campaigns against FGM. Initially, their contributions to community development and peace-building initiatives were small-scale yet had enormous impact on the lives of ordinary people living in fragile situations. Their programmes are now building new communities. In spite of the fragility of the Federal Government, lawlessness, chaos, poverty and under-development, Somali women have been participating in a new and vital civil society development in war-torn Somalia. The activities of such organizations are crucial and highly necessary in post-conflict situations.

3.4 Political Impact

As a result of armed conflict and famine, Somalia has remained in a consistent state of "complex emergency". This has frustrated efforts at long-term development in the form of women's empowerment. Violence, food insecurity and other threats have rendered women vulnerable to political and economic insecurity. Under Barre's regime, which lasted from 1969 to 1991,

women occupied positions such as colonels, ambassadors and judges. With the intensity of armed conflict and subsequent overthrow of Barre's regime, women's visibility in the public sphere lessened. Traditionally, Somali women could not represent clans and were not even considered clan members. This curtailed their participation in political discussions in the past. However, the persistence of armed conflict in Somalia and other parts of the world led to the UN recognition of the plight of women in armed conflicts through UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This has afforded women greater opportunities to engage in cross-clan coalition building. For example, at the Arta Conference, women from different clans came together to form 'the sixth clan' so women could participate formally in the peace negotiations.⁸⁶ During the conference, which established the Transitional Federal Government, women were recognized as the sixth clan and given space to participate in the negotiations. Fifty female leaders were trained to participate in the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) peace processes, which began in October 2002.

On 4th November 2012, the new Somali Prime Minister, Abdi Farah Shirdon, announced the composition of his first cabinet with two women appointed as part of the 10-member cabinet. Fowsiyo Yusuf Hajji Aden was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, while Maryam Kassim was appointed Minister of Social Development. Fowsiyo's appointment marks the first time in Somali history that a woman has headed the Foreign Ministry. The Somali Federal Parliament approved the nominations of the new cabinet and both women still officially hold their positions. Although legislative resolutions require a 30% quota of women in parliament, the August 2012 elections saw women win 38 of the 275 parliamentary seats available, the equivalent to 13.8%. This is by far shorter than the minimum number required. Nevertheless, the appointment of these two women demonstrates a serious recognition from the newly elected Somali government of the role of women in the decision-making process of the country. Despite this improvement, the harsh reality however remains that the elevation of women in politics does not automatically translate into the same elevation in the society towards achieving

86 IRIN News, SOMALIA: Women peace delegates lobby for their rights, 28 March 2003.

gender equality. This is not to undermine the brave decision taken by the Somali government, and the courage of the two women to take up the task while in a society that has been infused with a combination of patriarchy and religious fundamentalism, but to encourage such recognition to cascade to the grassroots in Somalia.

3.5 The Role of Somali Women in the Somalia Conflict

In times of conflict, war and conflict resolution, gender roles shift dramatically. Most of the time, these shifts challenge power structures. Sometimes, the shifts in gender roles make women defenseless, exposing them to sexual attacks and economic and social exploitation. Many Somali women have become the main breadwinners and heads of households after the fall of the central government. In 2004, it was reported that many innocent women and children were the prime targets in the inter-clan fighting in Southern Somalia. In the words of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Maxwell Gaylard; “...*this is a very disturbing trend and one that has shocked the communities themselves, for both the unusual brutality of the killings and the intentional targeting of women and children*”.⁸⁷

During armed conflict, women can serve as warriors as well as peacemakers, as documented by El-Bushra,⁸⁸ Jacobson,⁸⁹ and Mukta.⁹⁰ In Somalia, women’s involvement in the peace campaign began soon after the outbreak of the civil war in the early 1990s, when women’s groups, umbrella organizations and individuals organized peace rallies and lobbied political leaders to diffuse tensions and curb violence between clans and between armed faction leaders in Mogadishu. Often these women were successful because they were seen as neutral and disinterested mediators who were using their influence and relations

87 UN News, 2004.

88 El-Bushra, J. ‘Transforming Conflict: Some Thoughts on a Gendered Understanding of Conflict Processes’, in Jacobs, S., Jacobson, R. & Marchbank, J. (eds.), *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance*. London:Zed Books, 2000. (pp.66-86),

89 Ruth Jacobson (2000), *Women and Peace in Northern Ireland: a Complicated Relationship*, in Susie Jacobs/Ruth Jacobson/Jennifer March bank (eds.): *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance*, University of Vienna, 2000

90 Parita, Mukta, Parita, *Gender, Community, Nation: The Myth of Innocence*, , London , Sage 1997 in Susie Jacobs/Ruth Jacobson/Jennifer Marchbank, *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance*, University of Vienna, 2000

as mothers, sisters, daughters and wives of the fighting men, and because they were seen as addressing the immediate needs of the community.

3.6 Somali Women and Disarmament

In the period between 1991 and 2007, Somali women participated as providers, warriors and peacemakers in the protracted conflict that plagued the country for over a decade. Despite the customary limitations, Somali women struggled to contribute to the peace building process in war-torn Somalia.⁹¹ In 1992, for instance, the Somali Women Development Association (SOWDA), a local women's organization, attempted to collect money to establish a police force that would keep law and order in Hargeisa city, Somaliland. The SOWDA also organized a demonstration in the same year to motivate and encourage local elders to mediate the then conflict between two clans in the area. Encouraged by the activities of the SOWDA, the local elders successfully mediated between the warring clans and were able to end the conflict after a five-month negotiation effort.⁹² In a similar manner, Somali women in Bosaso (Puntland) successfully lobbied for a Police Force and Prisons, financially supported by a monthly levy from Basaso port. This Police entity made a significant contribution to peace and order in the area. In 1998, the women handed over the management of the Police Force to the new Local Administration.

During the great famine of 1991-92, for example, women saved the lives of many civilians by knocking on doors and delivering food to households some of who, when, faced with certain starvation, many families chose to die with dignity rather than beg for food and locked themselves in their homes. Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) currently manages a human rights, peace and development centre in Mogadishu. SSWC has sponsored a micro-credit programme for women and facilitated a reconciliation meeting between factions by mobilizing women from different clans and sub-clans to diffuse tensions. In 2001, SSWC strengthened grassroots organizations through managerial and logistical support.

91 Bridget, Byrne, *Gender, Conflict and Development*, Volume I, Brighton, 1996

92 Mohamed, Faiza, Jama, *Equality Now: Somali Women's Role in Building Peace and Security*. Paper Presented at the Arria Formula Meeting on Women, Peace and Security, United Nations, 23 October 2000.

Somali women also played an important role in the demobilization and disarmament of the local warring militias. One example of such an endeavor was the role of IIDA (Women's Development Organization) in Merca (Southern Somalia) in 1997. In collaboration with the Coordinating Committee of the Organizations for Voluntary Service (COSV), an Italian NGO, and with EU funding, the IIDA offered education, housing and income opportunities for about 150 disarmed militias in return for submitting their weapons (Mathews, 2001:67). In the capital Mogadishu, similar activities have taken place through the initiative of a Somali women's organization known as the Coalition for Grassroots Women's Organizations (COGWO). As a result of the efforts of COGWO, the Peace and Human Rights Network (PHRN) was established. The PHRN was able to bring together traditional elders, civil society, ex-militia, and sports groups.⁹³ Almost always, the various all-Somali peace conferences which took place in and outside Somalia were (for all practical purposes) synonymous with clan conferences. Clans are dominated by male clan elders and clan chiefs, since women are formally segregated and not allowed to play an active role in these conferences in line with the traditional customs of Somali society.⁹⁴

3.7 Somali Women and Political Participation

Despite the unfavorable situation of gender disparity on the ground, Somali women have been struggling to voice their collective opinion as clan-free entities and part-and-parcel of society. The first significant opportunity for Somali women to contribute significantly in peace and dialogue among the Somali people was through their participation in the Arta conference in Djibouti, which took place in 2000. At this conference, in addition to other decisions that were taken, it was agreed that female representatives would be included in the future national parliament. In October 2002, another conference (the Somali Peace and National Reconciliation Conference) took place in Eldoret, Kenya, with the support of the Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). In this conference, 33 percent of the delegates representing civil society organizations were women.

93 Mathews, Dylan. *War Prevention Works: 50 Stories of People Resolving Conflict* Reseach Group, , Oxford, 2001

94 Elmi, Asha Hagi, *Women Defending Peace*. Paper presented at the "Women Defending Peace Conference", Geneva, Switzerland, 22–24 November, 2004.

In an increased effort to restore peace in Mogadishu, as many as sixty women peace activists appealed for the restoration of peace and stability in the city in June 2003. In their declaration they said the following: *“We have decided that we will do anything to bring pressure to bear on the leaders ... to restore peace and stability ... This city has suffered more than anywhere else in Somalia, and it is the women who bear the brunt of the problems. We are the mothers, sisters and wives who have to care for the family after our men are killed or maimed.”*⁹⁵

Somali women’s political activism dates back to their indispensable role in advocating for political independence during the colonial era through a robust women’s independence movement working closely with the Somali Youth League, the largest nationalist organization at the time in Somalia. After independence, political recognition for women and the women’s movement dwindled and only regained significant socio-political recognition and access to education and employment, as well as the right to vote during the Barre regime. Despite their critical roles in lobbying and mediating for peace and making significant economic contribution to support the family, Somali women had no significant role in formal reconciliation processes and political decision-making. Out of the 14 reconciliation conferences designed to restore peace in Somalia, women were accepted as official delegates only at the last two: the Arta Conference in 2000 and the IGAD-led National Reconciliation Conferences in 2002-04. Before these conferences, Somali women had never participated formally in any of the reconciliation meetings or conferences but played a limited role as go-betweens for opposing political factions. Women’s political involvement in the Djibouti-sponsored Arta Conference represented a dramatic shift, with women taking a lead role in resolving local conflicts, mobilizing grassroots support, promoting human rights, and advocating for public social services.

In the Somali consultative meeting held in Mbagathi, Nairobi, Kenya, in January 2004, Somali women lobbied to get at least 25 percent representation in Somalia’s legislative, executive, and judicial institutions. At the end of the consultative meeting, a declaration was issued, signed by the Somali delegates. One of the signatories of this document entitled “Declaration on the Harmonization of

95 IRIN News, SOMALIA: Women peace delegates lobby for their rights, 10th June 2003.

Various Issues Proposed by the Somali Delegates at the Somali Consultative Meetings” was a woman, Asha Hagi Elmi, representing civil society. This marked the first time a Somali woman ever signed a peace agreement. Though the Somali women failed to achieve the 25 percent target, they were able to get some concessions in the country. Regardless of the substantially less representation by Somali women at the IGAD-led conference in Kenya, with only 21 women representatives and 34 officially registered women delegates of the more than 600 participants, the women delegates did succeed in lobbying for and achieving an allocation of parliamentary seats.⁹⁶

In the constitution adopted in January 2004, Article 29 of the Transitional Federal Charter allocated twelve percent of parliamentary seats to women. In other words, out of 275 seats in parliament, 33 seats were assigned to women deputies. Despite the challenges, the Federal Government is currently taking a bold step in the implementation of this constitution by nominating women to top political and key decision-making positions.

3.8 Somali Women in the Diaspora

Somali women in the diaspora make a significant contribution to the Somali economy and livelihoods through remittances, humanitarian assistance and participation in recovery and reconstruction efforts. In the last two decades, the Somali crisis represented the most intractable case of state collapse i.e. lack of a central government to govern and interact with the international community. This resulted in a number of reconciliation conferences organized and held outside Somalia. The case of Somaliland in the early 1990s was different and unique due to the collaboration between the diaspora, especially women and the local communities led by a strong and committed traditional leadership inside. Somaliland’s business women in the diaspora largely funded the lengthy reconciliation processes that laid the foundations for its future stability. The collaboration between the different actors inside and outside the country achieved remarkable success in building peace and restoring the status quo.⁹⁷

96 Center for Research and Dialogue (CRD), Interpeace (2006), *Pioneers of Peace’ Advancing the Involvement of Women in Peacebuilding in South-Central Somalia* (in the series ‘Dialogue for Peace’), <http://www.interpeace.org>.

97 Hassan, Sheikh and Sally, Healy, *Somalia’s Missing Million: The Somali Diaspora and its Role in Development*, 2005.

In matters of peace and conflict, the Diaspora has proved to be a double-edged sword. At times, it has contributed to fuelling the conflicts that destroy, while at other times it has acted as a lifeline and safety net for millions who would have otherwise perished. In the early 1990s, during the internecine clan conflicts, the Diaspora was a powerful engine that drove the conflict into unimaginable proportions of social, political and economic destruction. According to Cindy Horst, *“the most likely source of financial income for clan disputes came from clan members in the Diaspora. Committees were set up in Somalia, occasionally combined with initiatives outside Somalia, to tap this source in a structured way.”* Evidence collected in Norway indicates that during 1994, payment of individual monthly sums of \$300 were not uncommon. In some cases, funds were being raised from opposing clans in conflict living alongside each other in Norway.” Aggregate figures are harder to obtain, but sums between \$500,000 and \$5 million were reportedly been raised in support of clan conflicts.⁹⁸

This however does not in any way underrate the support of women in the Diaspora in the quest for peace, economic and political stability in the country. Although many in the Diaspora have experienced great challenges in their host countries, over time they have benefited from better educational and economic opportunities, particularly Somali women who have generally been able to achieve far higher qualifications and career advancement than would have been available to them in Somalia. While some of these women have returned to establish businesses in Somalia, others continue to send remittances back home in support of nation building and advocacy for women concessions.

The experience of the Centre for Research and Dialogue (CRD) in local reconciliation attests to the strong participation of the diaspora’s women in defusing tensions and providing finance to support elders resolving clan conflicts.⁹⁹ According to CRD reports, Diaspora delegations of clans in conflict visited the areas as one team, facilitated local reconciliation by injecting financial incentives, and promising to rehabilitate local facilities such as schools and health clinics as incentives to sustain the peace. The Diaspora’s role in local peace

98 Cindy, Horst, “The Transnational Political Engagements of Refugees: Remittance Sending Practices amongst Somalis in Norway”. Conflict, Security and Development 8, 3 October 2008.

99 CRD, Reports of Hiran, Galgadud and Mudug local reconciliations, Unpublished Manuscript. 2007

building extended to supporting local actors in establishing administrations at local, regional and national levels.

Economically, the Somali Diaspora is a major contributor to the livelihoods of Somalis as well as the recovery and development process in general. In 2004, the worldwide Somali Diaspora sent remittances estimated at between \$750 million and \$1 billion to Somalia each year,¹⁰⁰ making the country the fourth most remittance dependent country in the world. The amount includes support given to individual families and other relatives and friends, contributions to aid and development and investment in small and medium enterprises. Remittance transfer used to be the preserve of men but there is evidence from Norway that women are increasingly important contributors to this initiative. The benefits of sending money back home are not limited to the economic well-being of those left behind, but also have important social significance. Besides being a lifeline, the remittances are the glue that binds together families separated by physical distance. Laura Hammond argues: “*Remittance results in strengthening of this transnational community that exists in multiple localities. ...Inability or failure to remit can weaken the social ties, sow the seeds of conflict and alienation of the sender*”.¹⁰¹

100 UNDP Somalia QUESTS project annual reports 2007/8 unpublished.

101 Laura, Hammond, “Obliged to Give: Remittance and the Maintenance of Transnational networks Between Somalis at Home and Abroad”. School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. 2006

4.0 The UN and Somalia Federal Government on Violence against Women

4.1 UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security

The SCR 1325 is the first resolution on women, peace and security and was unanimously adopted by the United Nations Security Council on 31 October 2000 marking the first time when the Security Council addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women. This resolution recognized the contribution women make towards conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peace-building. The resolution also stressed the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security. The resolution is binding upon all UN Member States and the adoption of the Resolution marked an important international political recognition that women and gender are relevant to international peace and security. Many resolutions, treaties, conventions, statements and reports followed SCR 1325. The resolution is recognized as a historic and unprecedented document that is an integral part of the women, peace and security policy framework.

Key Provisions of SCR 1325 include: increased participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making, attention to specific protection needs of women and girls in conflict, gender perspective in post-conflict processes, gender perspective in UN programming, reporting and in SC missions, and gender perspective and training in UN peace support operations. Key Actors responsible for implementation of SCR 1325 include: the Security Council; Member States; UN entities; the Secretary General; and parties to conflict.

In Somalia, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the United Nations mission and agencies, the Somalia Federal Government and warring parties need to support the implementation of this resolution. Whereas the focus at the moment may be on ending hostilities among the warring groups, it is

important that all parties take into consideration the place of women, who make up a large percentage of the population in the peace process. Karen Barnes and Funmi Olonisakin caution that: *“While not doubting that ending violence is a key step in the peacekeeping process, failing to consider how gender inequalities sustain the conflict and the various roles that men, women, boys and girls are playing in carrying out the violence could compromise the achievement of stability.”*¹⁰² It is therefore critical that women issues are put into consideration from the beginning of the peace process in Somalia.

AMISOM which is an instrument of the African Union (AU) for bringing peace in Somalia needs to mirror the spirit of the union’s support for SCR 1325. The AU is committed to gender equality and women empowerment as reflected in the Protocol to the African Charter on People’s and Human Rights, the Rights of Women in Africa and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA). This means that AMISOM has an obligation to ensure gender is mainstreamed within the organization and that women are included in conflict resolution and the democratization process for sustainable peace.

Other Security Council Resolutions followed 1325 focusing on women’s needs and protection during conflict. These include SCR 1327 which reaffirmed the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution and peace building. SCR 1820 addressed sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations and the need for strategies to minimize the prevalence of such acts with benchmarks for measuring progress. SCR 1889 urged member states, UN bodies, donors and civil society to ensure that women’s protection and empowerment are taken into account during post-conflict needs assessment and planning. SCR 1960 established a monitoring, analysis and reporting mechanism on conflict-related sexual violence in situations and called upon parties to armed conflict to make specific, time-bound commitments to prohibit and punish sexual violence. SCR 2106 focuses on accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict and stressing women’s political and economic empowerment. These resolutions, although not binding, have become a basis for championing frameworks that address the needs of women.¹⁰³

102 Fenmi, Olonisakin, K. Barnes and E. Ikpe, *Women, Peace and Security*, Rutledge, London, 2011

103 UN Documents for Women, Peace and Security: Security Council Resolutions <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/sitemap.shtml>

4.2 The Somalia National Government and Security

Repeated efforts to create a viable national government in Somalia have failed over the years with a steady increase in human rights violations. At present, Somalia is divided into three parts: Somaliland and Puntland and South and Central Somalia. Somalia has been a model of a collapsed state for a long time, a geographical entity with borders but with no effective way to exert authority within those borders. The international community and virtually all of the country's neighbours have been engaged in efforts at mediation of the Somali internal dispute. For Somalia's neighbours, stability in the region as well as relieving the burden of the large number of refugees they hosted were paramount considerations. The year 2000 witnessed a turning point in the reconciliation efforts when Djibouti hosted a major reconciliation conference which culminated in the creation of the Transitional National Government (TNG), whose three-year mandate expired in August 2003. Under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Kenya organized the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference in 2002, which adopted a Transitional Federal Charter in June 2004. Based on this Charter, a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was established in October 2004.

At the beginning of 2008, a UN-sponsored peace conference was held in Djibouti, resulting in a ceasefire and power sharing agreement between the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia and the TFG. In December of the same year, the president of the TFG, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, resigned and was succeeded by Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed in 2009, who oversaw the extension of TFG's mandate and the transition process for 2 years until 2011. With the emergence of the Al-Shabaab in January 2010, TFG lost its grip of control of Somalia as violent armed conflict characterized the activities of the Al-Shabaab.

Void of a functioning central government for a long time, Somalia has not been able to develop a comprehensive national development strategy. The Recovery and Development Programme (RDP), the result of a Joint Needs Assessment undertaken in 2005 and 2006 and developed by the international community under the joint leadership of the UN and the World Bank, is considered the

main framework for international support for Somalia. The RDP was subjected to intensive consultations with Somali authorities and the civil society. It covered the period 2008 to 2012 and is currently being updated. Authorities in Somaliland formally endorsed the document while both Puntland and South and Central Somalia stated that they agreed with the broad priorities set out in the document.

Despite the intervention by the international community and the regional body in Somalia, women's social development indicators continue to lag behind those of men. The adult literacy rate is estimated to be 27 percent for females compared with 50 percent for males. The gross enrolment rate for girls is 15 percent compared with 27 percent for boys.¹⁰⁴ Women tend to occupy a lesser role in the public sphere in Somalia. Their position was not made any easier by their effective marginalization during the formation of the Transitional Federal Parliament where women were initially being granted a 25 percent representation, then 12 percent, and eventually ended up with 8 percent following the negotiations of 2004.

4.3 The International Community and Security in Somalia

The international community has been implementing humanitarian, rehabilitation and development programmes for the Somali people in a complex and varied environment. The balance between humanitarian life-saving needs and possibilities to undertake development work varies greatly between regions. South and Central Somalia has fallen back into active conflict and Mogadishu itself has become a protracted war zone. The region continued to face severe humanitarian needs despite the genuine hope generated by the 2004 establishment of the TFG and by the Djibouti Agreement of 2008.

In view of the deteriorating security situation, the heads of state and government of IGAD issued a communiqué at the January 31, 2005 meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, on their plan to deploy a Peace Support Mission to Somalia. According to the communiqué, the Mission would “provide security support to the TFG and guarantee the sustenance of the IGAD peace process and assist with the

¹⁰⁴ World Bank, UNFPA ‘Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting in Somalia’, 2005

reestablishment of peace and security including training of the police and the army”.¹⁰⁵ The decision of the IGAD summit was endorsed by the Fourth Ordinary Session of the African Union and authorized by the 24th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU held on 7 February 2005.

With a view to implementing the decisions, the AU/IGAD sent a Fact-Finding and Reconnaissance Mission on February 14, 2005 to determine the mandate, force, size, structure, and tasks of the peace support mission. The proposed IGAD Forces for Somalia (IGASOM) deployment plan was presented by the Military Experts to the IGAD Member states, refined by the chiefs of defense, and finally approved by the Ministers of Defense at the 14 March 2005 meeting in Entebbe, Uganda¹⁰⁶ which planned to deploy up to 10,000 peacekeepers throughout Somalia starting from April 2005. The expected cost of IGASOM was estimated at US\$ 413 million per annum.¹⁰⁷ Due to the high cost, IGASOM could not continue its peacekeeping mission in Somalia, giving way to the AU to deploy peacekeepers in the country. With the intensification of the insurgency in 2005 and 2006, IGAD showed its support for the TFG as a legitimate government in Somalia that needed to be assisted by the international community. Thus, it pushed for the deployment of the African Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia, which was deployed in March 2007.

Puntland has been relatively stable despite weak governance. It is now advancing in its transition from a post-conflict to a development situation. Somaliland has achieved substantial progress towards building a democratic state despite the recent instability resulting from the postponement of presidential elections.¹⁰⁸ Opportunities for genuine development work are already evident in Somaliland. The capacities and resources of local governing authorities also vary widely with local authorities in Puntland and Somaliland being better established and

105 Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) IGAD Communiqué on January 31, 2005 Summit in Abuja, Nigeria, (2005a),.

106 Mulugeta, Kidist, *The Role of Regional and International Organizations in Resolving the Somali Conflict: The Case of IGAD*, 2009

107 Mays, Terry M., “The AMISOM: Why did it successfully deploy following the failure of IGASOM?” Paper Presented in partial completion of the requirement of the Certificate of training in United Nations Peace Support Operations, 2005.

108 Elections planned for 2008 were finally held on 26 June 2010 and resulted in a peaceful transfer of power to a newly elected President.

more capable of providing services than those in South and Central Somalia. Similarly, the economic and human development situation varies across the different regions, across rural and urban areas, and across social groups.

As a result of subsequent catastrophic security incidents in 2008,¹⁰⁹ the UN adopted a security Phase IV for all regions except Mogadishu and Badhade (Phase V). Despite visible differences between various locations and regions, Phase IV is still being applied across the board and many observers question the appropriateness of such an approach. Although it is understood that a number of different considerations influenced the security classification and that the two situations are rather different, the simple comparison between Somalia and Afghanistan raises questions about the rigor of the security assessment process. This is of particular importance given the consequences of a phase IV on the efficiency of operations and the cost of delivering assistance. After several abortive attempts by the African Union to end the fighting in Somalia, AMISOM is finally making headway towards stabilizing the country. Thus far, the insurrections of the Al-Shabaab have been contained and there is relative calm in the country.

¹⁰⁹ The Head of the UNDP office in Mogadishu was killed in July 2008 and suicide bombings occurred in Hargeisa and Bosaso on 29 October 2008. In Hargeisa, the UNDP office was targeted, killing two UN employees and injuring six.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

War at any level causes enormous suffering for both men and women caught up in it. This paper has demonstrated that women experience war in a multitude of ways, from playing an active part as combatants to being targeted as members of the civilian population or due to their vulnerability as women. Women's experience of war is multifaceted; stemming from separation, loss of family members and livelihood, increased risk of sexual violence, wounding, deprivation and death. The War in Somalia has forced women into unfamiliar roles that require developing coping skills. However, the protection to which women are entitled emanates from general and specific realities. Constant efforts must be made to promote knowledge of and compliance with the obligations of international humanitarian law. This must be done by as wide an audience as possible and using all available means. Everyone must be actively responsible for improving the plight of women in times of war and women themselves must be more closely involved in all the measures taken on their behalf. In Somalia, the International Community represented by AMISOM, UNSOM, other UN agencies and international organizations must continue to execute their mandate with women issues in mind and in line with the context of conflict. Human dignity is universal and must always and in every circumstance be treated as such. The Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security could provide good reference points for Somalia's government and local and International partners in their plans to stabilize the country. This resolution should be a constant reminder that women's needs and participation must be considered at all stages and levels of policy development and implementation.

5.2 Recommendations

Contemporary literature suggests that gender discrimination is a cultural phenomenon in most African societies. This has led to increased female torture and suffering in armed conflict situations as evident in Somalia. However, at a global scale, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000, call for a universal commitment in curbing human rights violations and female vulnerability and promoting gender inclusivity in conflict situations and mitigation approaches. With regard to the armed conflict in Somalia, the following is recommended for both the Somalia Federal Government and the International Community:

- Recognize that the impact of armed conflicts, including forced displacement, impoverishment and gender-based violence, are violations of human rights rather than merely conventional or cultural concerns that are unavoidable outcomes in a conflict situation. As such, perpetrators should be brought to justice at all costs to redeem women from these humiliating and stigmatizing experiences in armed conflict situations.
- Provide institutional support to key women's organizations and activities to enable them consolidate and extend the contributions they are already making in the resolution of violent conflict and the consolidation of peace. This will support them in defining a shared analysis and common agenda, and to promote solidarity between different women's networks.
- Provide specialized services for women who experience violent impacts of armed conflict, including outreach programmes and counseling to manage reproductive health concerns related to physical assault, as well as psychological trauma resulting from armed conflict.
- Support further education and action-based research on gender-related issues such as women's and children's access to health, women's access to justice, domestic violence, and the effects of war trauma,

and ensuring their dissemination to a broader and gender-balanced audience.

- Implement Security Council resolution 1325 of 2000 in order to increase the political representation of women, and include them in decision-making, peace negotiations and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- Expand the engagement of women in all facets of the Dialogue for Peace, providing additional support wherever necessary to ensure that women are able to make a full contribution to peace activities.
- Provide gender training and raise awareness among policymakers on the importance of including women in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction efforts and also involve local women organizations in decision-making while conducting relief or conflict-related interventions.
- Adopt a comprehensive approach in rebuilding Somalia towards peace and security beyond military intervention. It is very important to secure awareness channels and accessible means of knowledge and to empower enlightened religious co-existence. The task of rebuilding awareness inside the new Somalia is as important as constructing schools and health centres.
- The Somali government should follow through on its commitment to mainstreaming gender issues in all government policies and programmes. This would boost the involvement of women in both political and socio-economic decision-making in the country.
- Women are highly successful in developing civil societies. They create grass-roots civil society organizations and partner with organizers to provide integral humanitarian support and socio-economic development. Most importantly, women are responsible for raising and teaching the young generation. Consequently, engaging and helping them realize their dreams, and providing them with a platform

for their voices to be heard, offers a powerful way to assist Somalia's development during the early stages of the new government.

- While recognizing the central role that women play in promoting peace and reconciliation, and the need to build their capacities and skills to make their voices heard; it is also important to acknowledge the need to unify their voices with those of men through their participation in gender-balanced processes. Interventions should not only aim to support women's organizations but also to involve them in forums and negotiations that would bring them into direct contact with male politicians and community leaders. This will ensure that the woman's viewpoint is not only heard, but also pushed to the front of the political agenda.

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Highlights of Key Messages

Environmental Insecurity in Eastern Africa: The Case of Somalia

- Environmental degradation in Somalia has caused movement of a large population from dry lands to river valleys, a factor that has increased tensions in those areas.
- The environment is a major cause of the conflict in Somalia today but it is often not easily recognized because it affects all the parties in the conflict.
- No effective and sustainable solution to the Somali conflict can afford to ignore environmental security.
- Managing environmental security in Somalia is urgent and requires local and international actors' support
- The country requires a stabilization strategy that does not necessarily aim to restore past stability but aspires to a better political, economic and social future.
- Peace Support Operations need to enlarge their training and field operations agenda to accommodate all the vital aspects of environmental security.
- Somalia can make use of the plethora of global and regional mechanisms, agreements and treaties having to do with protection of different aspects of environmental concerns.
- Mainstreaming environmental management and conservation in national development planning is necessary for durable peace and security.

Impact of Armed Conflict on Women in Somalia

- Implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in order to increase the political representation of women, and include them in decision-making, peace negotiations and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- Provide institutional support to key women's organizations and activities to enable them consolidate and extend the contributions they are already making in the resolution of violent conflict and the consolidation of peace
- Expand the engagement of women in all facets of the Dialogue for Peace, providing additional support wherever necessary to ensure that women are able to make a full contribution to peace activities.
- The women in Somalia have shown resilience on many fronts and must be supported economically and through capacity building to enable them effectively participate in the political and economic spheres.
- Provide specialized services for women who suffer from violent impacts of armed conflict.



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